

King County Parks **Your** **King County** **Big Backyard**

King County
Parks and Recreation Division



2008
Second Quarter Report
Parks Omnibus Ordinance Report
to the King County Council
January – June 2008

we're at work so you can play

Highlights of the Second Quarter

- ❖ Overall, business revenues through the second quarter of 2008 were higher than during the same period in 2007. This is largely due to revenues generated by events such as Cirque du Soleil and the start of the Marymoor Concert Series.
- ❖ Cirque du Soleil returned to Marymoor Park for a five-week run that lasted from April 23 through June 1. Revenue from parking fees and facility rental was approximately \$700,000. This is a 27 percent increase over revenue from 2006's run, with costs only increasing 7 percent from 2006. The Cirque du Soleil is scheduled to return in 2010.
- ❖ Revenue from ball fields and facility rentals experienced a large increase compared to the same period in 2007 due to the two major athletic field renovation projects that were completed during the second quarter. The ball fields include Preston Park and Athletic Fields and Mel Olson Stadium in Steve Cox Memorial Park and have been reserved consistently since opening. The yurts at Tolt-MacDonald, which have also been reserved consistently, contributed to the increase in revenue in this category.
- ❖ The Renton Pool transferred to the Renton School District during the first quarter of 2008, which had an impact on both revenues and expenditures in the swimming pools business unit.
- ❖ King County Executive Ron Sims and Councilmember Jane Hague helped launch the Division's major donor effort by co-signing and sending a fundraising letter to nearly 200 potential donors on behalf of the King County Parks Legacy Fund. Within a few weeks, Division partner, Northwest Parks Foundation, received \$4,000 in donations, which go toward the Parks Legacy Fund for maintenance and operations.

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Parks and Recreation Division 2008 Second Quarter Report

Introduction

The Omnibus Parks Ordinance (Ordinance 14509), adopted November 18, 2002, by the King County Council, included this reporting requirement for the Parks and Recreation Division:

“The division shall provide a written report to the council, filed with the clerk of the council, at least four times each year, by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, and more frequently as directed by the council by motion, regarding the execution of the division’s duties and responsibilities as established in K.C.C. 2.16.045.E. Following transmittal of each written report, the division shall also make an oral presentation to the council. The written reports and oral presentations shall include, but shall not be limited to, information as to the division’s efforts in:

- A. Meeting revenue targets under section 7 of this ordinance;*
- B. Implementing entrepreneurial strategies including advertising, leasing and concession agreements;*
- C. Pursuing gifts, bequests and donations, including the value and sources of gifts, bequests and donations received;*
- D. Developing agreements with other organizations to provide recreation services;*
- E. Transferring parks and recreation assets within incorporated areas or potential annexation areas to cities; and*
- F. Community outreach and involvement.”*

This is our sixth year reporting on the accomplishments of the Division. Quarterly reports were transmitted for each quarter in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007. The year 2008 marks the first year of the renewed Parks Levy fund, which was approved by voters in August 2007, with collections running from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2013.

We have structured the quarterly report to correspond to the ordinance requirements. We welcome your ideas and input. Please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Brown or Tom Koney of the King County Parks and Recreation Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks at 206-296-8687 if you have any questions or suggestions.

Revenues - Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Revenues

2008 Adopted Revenues	\$26,540,518
2008 Revised Revenues	\$27,294,502
2008 Estimated Revenues ¹	\$27,314,963
2007 Actual Revenues ²	\$22,817,655

Second Quarter - Business Revenues Only

Levy funds, interest earnings, interfund transfers and similar revenues that are not within the control of the Division are excluded from this total.

Actual Business Revenues³ (includes user fees and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues)

January 1 – June 30, 2008	\$2,894,904
January 1 – June 30, 2007	\$2,225,614

In 2008, business revenues received through the second quarter were higher than the same period in 2007. This is largely due to revenues generated by events such as the Cirque du Soleil and the start of the Marymoor Concert Series.

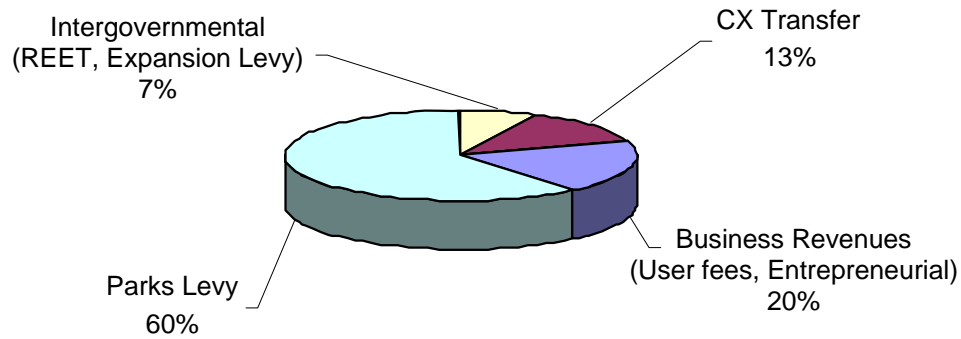
Even with a reduced asset base (due to the Benson Hill annexation and subsequent transfer of facilities), business revenues still comprise about 20 percent of the Division's 2008 revenue budget, which is similar to the percentage in 2002 at the beginning of Business Plan implementation (see charts, following page). The ensuing period has seen transfers of facilities, mostly pools, which generated more than \$2 million in revenues. The business revenue forecast for the remaining assets has risen from a total of about \$2.3 million in 2002 to more than \$5.1 million in the 2008 adopted budget.

¹ Includes Benson Hill annexation reduction, Greenhouse Program and White Center Heights Park grant supplementals, and revised revenue estimates.

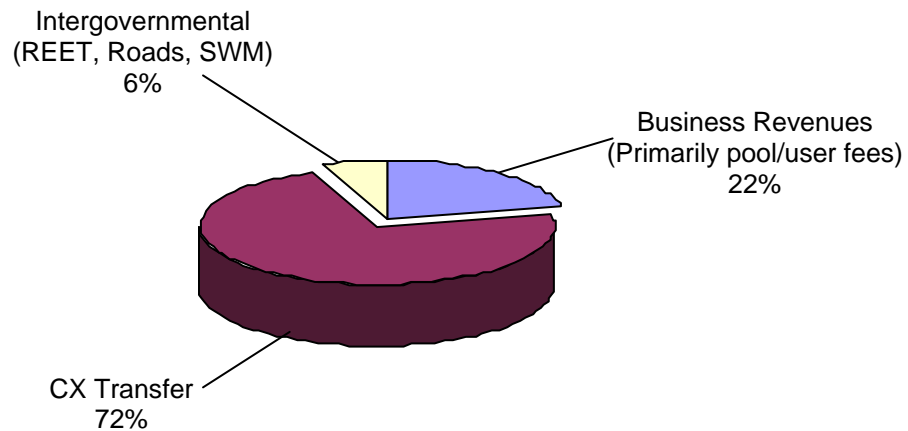
² 2007 Actuals based on 14th Month ARMS Reports.

³ Based on ARMS financial reports.

2008 Adopted Revenues - \$26.5M



2002 Adopted Revenues - \$26M



Expenditures – Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Expenditures

2008 Adopted Expenditures	\$27,446,665
2008 Revised Expenditures	\$27,557,745
2008 Estimated Expenditures ⁴	\$27,491,310
2007 Actual Expenditures ⁵	\$22,326,279

Second Quarter 2008 – Actual Expenditures

January 1 – June 30, 2008	\$11,006,193
January 1 – June 30, 2007	\$10,496,854

With half of the year having passed, expenditures were 40 percent of the Division's annual expenditure budget. This expenditure pattern is in line with historical business trends.

As part of the newly passed levy (2008 – 2013), the Division was tasked with increasing maintenance to historic, pre-2002 levels. As long as target fund balance is achieved, the Division intends to spend the maximum amount of its expenditure authority on maintaining parks, utilizing levy funds as the voters intended.

⁴ 2008 Estimated includes encumbrance carryover, reduction for the Benson Hill Annexation, and supplemental requests for the Greenhouse Program and White Center Heights grant.

⁵ 2007 Actuals based on 14th Month ARMS Reports.

Revenues - Implementing the Business Plan

Key Business Units

Marymoor Park



Marymoor Business Unit

	2008 thru Q2	2007 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$31,122	\$23,631	\$7,491	32%
Rev - fields	\$351,233	\$330,176	\$21,057	6%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - parking	\$220,963	\$229,436	-\$8,473	-4%
Rev - concerts	\$85,157	\$5,862	\$79,295	1353%
Rev - concert ticket sales	\$7,920	\$4,956	\$2,964	60%
Rev - Subway	\$11,059	\$7,995	\$3,064	38%
Rev - Pet Garden	\$2,150	\$4,500	-\$2,350	-52%
Sponsors/concessions	\$18,677	\$11,000	\$7,677	70%
Cirque du Soleil	\$697,176	\$0	\$697,176	
Naming rights	\$115,000	\$0	\$115,000	
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$1,540,000	\$618,000	\$922,000	149%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$961,000	\$878,000	\$83,000	9%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2008 Second Quarter highlights from Marymoor Park include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues received at Marymoor Park through the second quarter of 2008 are up from the same period in 2007. This is largely due to the return of Cirque du Soleil and the successful start of the summer concert series.
- ❖ Cirque du Soleil returned to Marymoor Park for a five-week run that lasted from April 23 through June 1. Revenue from parking fees and facility rentals was approximately \$700,000. This is a 27 percent increase over revenue from 2006's run, with costs only increasing 7 percent from 2006. About 120,000 visitors came to Marymoor Park to enjoy the show, a similar number as in 2006.
- ❖ The 2008 Concerts at Marymoor series kicked off June 5 with sold-out performances by Erykah Badu and The Roots. Revenue from the four June concerts, which includes a new \$5.00 per car parking fee, has already exceeded 50 percent of the total concert revenue collected from 2007's 12-concert series. The 2008 series will have a total of 23 days of shows and run through mid-September.
- ❖ Revenue for baseball/softball facility use at Marymoor Park has increased 6 percent in 2008 compared with the same period in 2007. Despite rainy spring weather, the new artificial turf infield on Field #1 was consistently available. This is an improvement from in the past, when rain-out days resulted in field cancellations and lower revenue.
- ❖ Despite reduced capacity during Cirque du Soleil, soccer field revenue is up 8 percent compared with the same period in 2007. Use of the synthetic turf fields increased 12 percent, which more than offset the lost availability of the grass fields that were utilized for Cirque du Soleil parking.

Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC)



Aquatic Center Business Unit

	2008 thru Q2	2007 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$388,820	\$373,434	\$15,386	4%
Rev - courses	\$75,514	\$62,924	\$12,590	20%
Rev - drop in	\$22,162	\$20,295	\$1,867	9%
Rev - Banquet Hall	\$14,398	\$17,882	-\$3,484	-19%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - Subway	\$9,676	\$10,837	-\$1,161	-11%
Rev - concessions	\$274	\$576	-\$302	-52%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$511,000	\$486,000	\$25,000	5%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$1,021,000	\$881,000	\$140,000	16%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2008 Second Quarter highlights from Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC) include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues are up slightly when compared to the same period in 2007 mainly due to increases in attendance during drop-in swimming hours, swimming lesson registration, and birthday party rentals. However, since there was an extended closure of the recreational pools in early 2007, a direct comparison is difficult.
- ❖ Revenue from facility rental is up slightly compared to 2007, due to a busier competition event schedule.
- ❖ Revenue from Banquet Hall rentals has begun to recover from the first quarter of 2008, when the facility was not available for reservation due to the competition event schedule.
- ❖ Expenditures have risen compared to the same period in 2007, again mainly due to preparation for and execution of the facility's heavy competition schedule and associated labor, electricity, and fuel costs. The facility continues to see significant savings from the operation of the new, more energy efficient scoreboard and the installation of new, more energy efficient light fixtures in the natatorium.
- ❖ The WKCAC continues to successfully market the facility and develop regional partnerships to attract major, nationally recognized events:
 - WKCAC is collaborating with the City of Federal Way, Seattle Sports Commission, and the University of Washington to prepare a bid to host the 2011 NCAA Swimming Championships.
 - WKCAC hosted a non-traditional competition, which was sponsored by the National Marine Science and Technology Society. The event featured remotely operated underwater exploration vehicles designed by high school and college students.

King County Fair in Enumclaw



Fair Business Unit

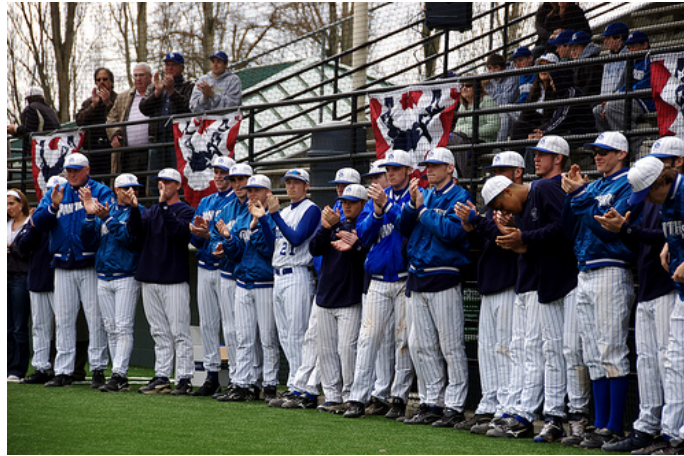
	2008 thru Q2	2007 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Rev - Annual Fair	\$45,264	\$54,000	-\$8,736	-16%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$45,000	\$54,000	-\$9,000	-17%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$58,410	\$97,000	-\$38,590	-40%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2008 Second Quarter highlights from the Fair include:

- ❖ A new theme introduced this year was *Grow it, Show it, Know it*, and highlighted groups such as 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and Open Class. The Division strategically recruited vendors and speakers that focused on topics such as sustainable farming, recycling, healthy living, and alternative fuels.
- ❖ The 2008 King County Fair took place over three days, July 18 – 20, and results will be reflected in the 2008 Third Quarter Report.

Recreation, Ball Fields, and Facilities



Fields and Facilities Business Unit

	2008 thru Q2	2007 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - ball fields	\$203,593	\$129,116	\$74,477	58%
Rev - facilities	\$62,763	\$67,311	-\$4,548	-7%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - RV camping	\$18,211	\$11,776	\$6,435	55%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$285,000	\$208,000	\$77,000	37%

Note: Expenditure information on facilities and ball fields is tracked annually and will be discussed in the Fourth Quarter Report.

2008 Second Quarter fields and facilities highlights include:

- ❖ Overall, revenue in this category has experienced a large increase compared to the same period in 2007, mainly due to ball field improvements and camping reservations.
- ❖ Two major athletic field renovation projects were completed during the Second Quarter: Preston Park and Athletic Fields, which added two synthetic turf soccer fields, and Mel Olson Stadium in Steve Cox Memorial Park, which improved the field and installed a synthetic turf in-field. These fields have been reserved consistently since the projects were completed.
- ❖ Revenue from yurt rentals, RV, and tent camping at Tolt-MacDonald Park and Campground has increased compared with the same period in 2007. Now in their second year, the yurts are highly popular and reserved consistently throughout the summer. With an increase in fuel costs affecting the general public, the close-in proximity of this park has contributed to its popularity.

Swimming Pools



Swimming Pools Business Unit

Includes: Evergreen, Renton, Vashon and Cottage Lake Facilities

	2008 thru Q2	2007 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - pool fees	\$151,957	\$297,696	-\$145,739	-49%
Rev – concessions*	\$72	\$262	-\$190	-73%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$152,000	\$298,000	-\$146,000	-49%
Expenditures (rounded)**	\$373,000	\$422,000	-\$49,000	-12%

* A concession payment of \$3,954 was posted incorrectly in this category in the 2007 Q1 Report and was corrected in the 2007 Q3 Report. The amount here reflects the 2007 Q2 corrected numbers.

** Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost-recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2008 Second Quarter swimming pool highlights include:

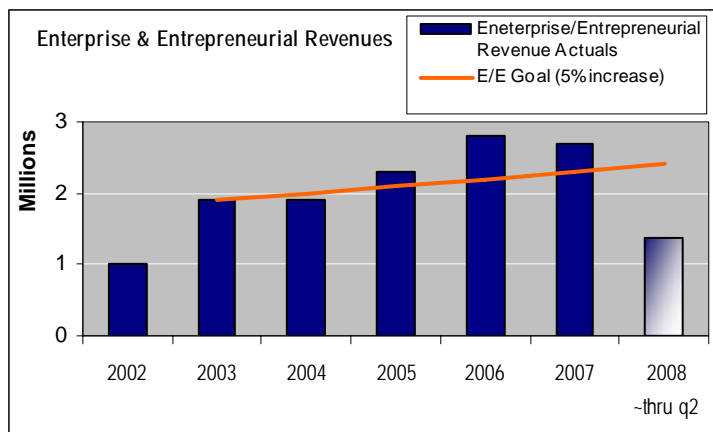
- ❖ The Renton Pool transferred to the Renton School District during the first quarter of 2008, which had an impact on both revenues and expenditures.
- ❖ The outdoor pools, Cottage Lake and Vashon, operate from mid-June through Labor Day and will be reported in the third quarter report.
- ❖ Evergreen Pool offered more swimming lessons during the second quarter of 2008 than for the same period in 2007. Non-traditional pool users, such as three different kayak groups, also use the facility for lessons. Evergreen Pool hosted "April Pool's Day" on April 19, a free event promoting water safety.

Implementing Entrepreneurial Strategies New Ways of Raising Revenues



Entrepreneurial Strategies

Overall business revenues through the second quarter of 2008 are up compared with the same period in 2007. The Division is on target to achieve its 5 percent annual increase growth goal for 2008. During the second quarter of 2008, the Division earned approximately \$1.36 million in enterprise and entrepreneurial revenue, compared to \$617,000 in the second quarter of 2007. This increase is largely attributed to the return of Cirque du Soleil, which ran from April 23 to June 1, and the start of the summer concert series in June.



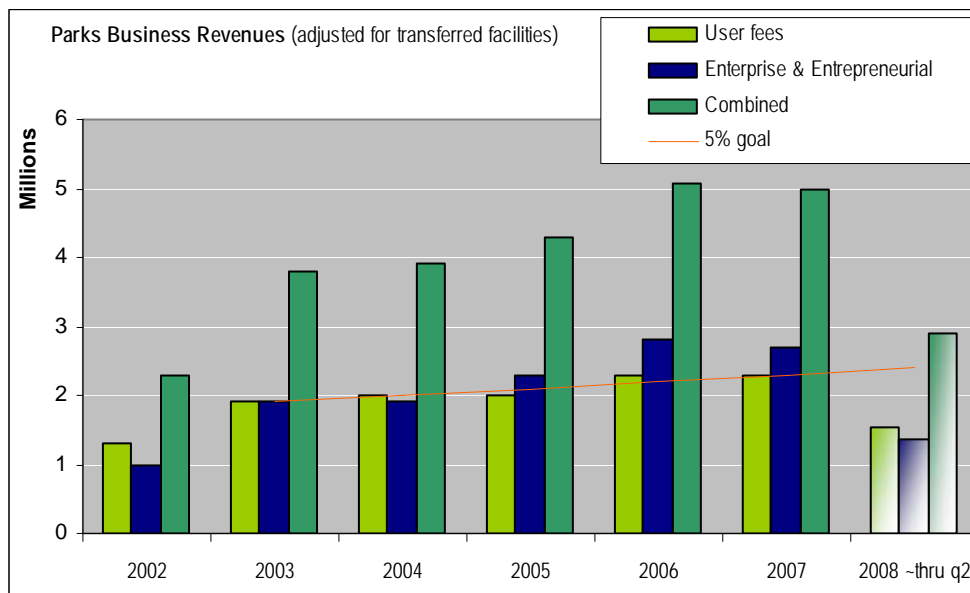
Since 2003, the Division has been maximizing business revenues and exploring other actions that reduce the tax subsidy needed for active recreation facilities. The Division will continue to foster and develop corporate, non-profit and community-based partnerships in an effort to increase revenues and leverage Revenue Enhancement and Opportunity Fund capital dollars.

Overall business revenues include enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues and user fee revenues. The Division defines enterprise/entrepreneurial revenues to include a myriad of non-traditional activities, ranging from corporate sponsorships and other creative promotions to facility rentals (such as the Marymoor concert series, Cirque du

Soleil, and yurts). These are generated largely as a result of cultivation efforts and partnerships established by the Division's staff. User fee revenues represent more traditional recreational activities, such as pool fees, field rentals, and recreational programs, and are generated according to what the market will bear.

Through the *Partnership for Parks* initiative, the Division aggressively pursues mutually beneficial agreements with other entities and generates revenue through the following:

1. Maximizing revenue from existing assets
2. Establishing corporate sponsorships, naming rights, and other contributions
3. Pursuing gifts, bequests, and legacy donations
4. Evaluating revenue-generating opportunities on King County lands to benefit the Division



2008 Second Quarter

business highlights include:

- ❖ On April 5, the White Center community commemorated the renaming of White Center Park to “Steve Cox Memorial Park” in honor of fallen King County Sheriff’s Deputy, Steve Cox. The event, which was well-covered by local print and broadcast media, also marked the grand re-opening of Mel Olson Stadium.
 - Improvements included a new synthetic turf infield, new bullpens, batting cages, bases and pitching mound, a re-graded outfield, and an enhanced grandstand.
 - Community partners leveraged King County’s seed investment by securing hundreds of thousands of dollars in in-kind donations of materials and services and volunteer labor to successfully complete a project that would have cost the county well over \$1 million.
- ❖ Cirque du Soleil returned to Marymoor for a five-week run that lasted from April 23 through June 1. Revenue from parking fees and facility rental was around \$700,000, a 27 percent increase over revenue from 2006’s run. Cirque du Soleil is scheduled to return in 2010.

- ❖ The Division released its annual “Request for Ideas and Proposals (RFI&P)” in April. Distributed widely among the business community, including the Daily Journal of Commerce, this call encourages potential partners to contact the Division with ideas for partnerships, promotions, and other revenue-generating possibilities. As a result of the RFI&P, high-profile events, and media coverage, the Division is more frequently identified by businesses and other organizations seeking collaborations.
- ❖ Revenue from yurt rentals, RV, and tent camping at Tolt-MacDonald Park and Campground has increased compared with the same period in 2007. Now in their second year, the yurts are highly popular and reserved consistently throughout the summer. In light of the current economic downturn and the close-in proximity of this park, the Division is exploring ways to promote “staycations” at this and other facilities as a way to increase occupancy rates.
- ❖ The Division began a partnership with specialty grocery chain, Whole Foods, which will donate a portion of its sales from two “5% for Parks” days (to be reported on in the third quarter). The Division is already discussing ways to continue collaborating with Whole Foods in the future.
- ❖ “The Wash Spot” opened in Marymoor Park in April and celebrated with a grand opening event in May. Located adjacent to the off-leash dog area, this new concession is a state-of-the-art self-serve dog wash facility. Revenue will be reported on in future quarterly reports.
- ❖ The Movies@Marymoor outdoor cinema series, which will be reported on in the third quarter, began promotions during the second quarter. In a unique partnership with Redmond Town Center shopping mall, the City of Redmond, and ExperienceRedmond.com tourism website, the Division has been promoting the movies through a collaborative “Summer Nights in Redmond” campaign. By working with these partners, the Division has leveraged its participation for more than \$20,000 in promotional activity.
- ❖ The 2008 Concerts at Marymoor series began June 5, and revenue from the four June concerts, which includes a new \$5.00 per car parking fee, has already exceeded 50 percent of the total concert revenue collected from 2007’s 12-concert series. The 2008 series has a total of 23 days of shows and runs through mid-September. With more shows and more higher-priced reserved tickets available, the Division is anticipating significantly higher revenue than in the past.
- ❖ In an effort to ramp up revenue from facility rentals for weddings and other private events, the Division launched the “Summer of Love” contest in June. One lucky couple winning a free facility rental for their special day.

Pursuing Gifts, Bequests, and Donations



2008 Second Quarter gifts and donations highlights include:

❖ Grants awarded:

- The White Center Teen Program was awarded \$17,500 from the state's "No Child Left Inside" Grant program, which will support a series of educational field trips to King County's parks, such as Cougar Mountain, as well as state and national parks and other outdoor learning facilities.
- The White Center Teen Program was awarded \$5,000 from 4Culture to provide free visual and performing art classes to urban youth, ages 12-19.

❖ Contributions – Establishing the King County Parks Legacy Fund:

- King County Executive Ron Sims and Councilmember Jane Hague helped launch the Division's major donor effort by co-signing and sending a fundraising letter to nearly 200 potential donors on behalf of the King County Parks Legacy Fund. Within a few weeks, Division partner, Northwest Parks Foundation, received \$4,000 in donations, which go toward the Parks Legacy Fund for maintenance and operations.
- To raise awareness about the Legacy Fund, the Division worked with KCTV to produce a two-minute video highlighting King County's parks and trails and the important role the Legacy Fund has in securing the future of these treasured facilities. The video is airing on KCTV and is streaming off the Division's website.
- In honor of a beloved co-worker who was killed by a wayward car while running, performance running gear company, Brooks, donated a memorial bench and pair of bronzed running shoes, which were installed along the Sammamish River Trail at a ceremony in April.

Agreements with Other Organizations **Community Partnership and Grants (CPG) Program**

The Community Partnership and Grants (CPG) Program continues to spearhead the development of partnerships that result in new facilities and amenities in King County. There are currently 30 projects in various stages of negotiation, planning, design, permitting, or construction that represent \$10 million in CPG grants and Capital Improvement Program commitments. By leveraging community investments (cash, grants, in-kind, donations, volunteers, etc), CPG projects will eventually add nearly \$60 million in new public recreation facilities.

Progress during the second quarter included:

- Completion of a new Velodrome support building
- Continued work on Phase I of the Audubon Birdloop in Marymoor Park
- Unanimous endorsement of the Ravensdale Park Master Plan by the community
- Launch of a community planning effort for Maury Island Marine Park
- Initiation of discussions on a new CPG project at Dockton Park
- Opening of the new Audubon Education Center in Seward Park
- Public meetings on the Duthie Hill mountain bike project

These photos highlight the variety of CPG projects:



Transferring Parks and Recreation Assets

Transferring local parks to cities and focusing on rural and regional programs has been a key element of the Parks Business Plan. Consistent with the Parks Business Plan, the transfer of parks and pools within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is an on-going discussion as part of a broader county annexation strategy. In addition, the Division seeks to transfer properties in advance of annexations whenever possible.

Progress on transfers during the second quarter of 2008 included:

- Inglewood Wetlands (City of Kenmore): transmitted; in Council committee
- Mary Olson Farm (portion of North Green River Park) (City of Auburn): transmitted; in Council committee
- Swamp Creek (City of Kenmore): transmitted; in Council committee
- Soaring Eagle portion (City of Sammamish): approved by Council; transfer in progress
- Tollgate Farm (City of North Bend): approved by Council; under implementation by Real Estate Services
- West Hill Park (City of Bothell): approved by Council; transfer in progress

Transfers of facilities that occurred prior to 2008 have been reported on in previous quarterly reports. See the 2007 Fourth Quarter report for a complete list.

The Division continues to work with cities and parks districts on the transfer of these remaining UGA facilities:

Park	Jurisdiction
132 nd Square Park	City of Kirkland
Bridle Crest Trail	City of Bellevue
Juanita Heights Park	Finn Hill Park and Recreation District
Juanita Triangle	Finn Hill Park and Recreation District
Kingsgate Park	City of Kirkland

Park	Jurisdiction
Klahanie Park	City of Issaquah
Maplewood Park	City of Renton
May Creek Park	City of Renton
Sierra Heights / Honey Dew Park	City of Renton
Sunset Playfield	City of SeaTac
Windsor Vista Park	City of Kirkland

Community Outreach and Involvement



Community Involvement and Volunteering

The Division strives to involve and engage volunteers and community members in the Parks system through a variety of activities. During the second quarter of 2008, 89 volunteer events took place throughout King County's system, with 1,201 volunteers providing some 6,457 hours of service. Volunteer efforts included trail repair, habitat restoration, greenhouse work, and park clean-ups and improvement projects.

2008 Second Quarter volunteer involvement highlights include:

- ❖ At Marymoor Park, Eagle Scout projects in April and June helped remove more than 2,000 square feet of invasive Scotch Broom. The troops will return for future work parties later in the summer.
- ❖ April was "Earth Month" and the Division benefited from numerous Earth Day-related volunteer projects. Earth Day was celebrated April 19th and teams of volunteers from REI, Eagle Scouts, Washington Trails Association, and other local businesses and community groups worked in the Greenhouse, Grand Ridge, Cavanaugh Pond, Meadowbrook Farm, and Preston Park and Athletic Fields.
- ❖ With the concert season at Marymoor Park also came the start of the second year of the "Marymoor Volunteer Recycling Crew." The Division has been recruiting and training teams of volunteers, who then encourage concert-goers to recycle and compost their food scraps, beverage cups, and other waste. Results of this program will be reported on in future quarterly reports.
- ❖ Volunteers helped re-route 300 feet of trail in Grand Ridge, repair steps at Squak Mountain, remove more than 5,600 pounds of invasive blackberries at Cavanaugh Pond, and survey and remove noxious weeds at Log Cabin Reach Natural Area.

- ❖ The newly formed “Friends of Skyway Park” held monthly work parties in the park during the second quarter of 2008 and have focused on removing invasive blackberries from wetland areas.

Community Outreach Initiatives

www.parksfeedback.com

Launched in December 2005 as a pilot program and expanded to the entire system in the second quarter of 2006, *parksfeedback.com* has proved to be an extremely useful customer feedback tool connecting citizens and user groups with the Division.

Through *parksfeedback.com*, the Division receives a variety of compliments, suggestions, feedback, and notifications, which are delivered directly to the email inboxes of Division staff. While the feedback system does not provide a statistical gauge for constituent satisfaction, it is a powerful tool that asks a series of multiple choice questions and allows users to write in comments and include their email or telephone number to receive a direct response from the Division.

The notifications sent by park users through the *parksfeedback.com* tool also serve as “eyes and ears on the ground” for the Division’s 25,000 acres of property. Communications from park users have helped the Division to identify problem areas in parks and along trails, such as incidents of graffiti and vandalism, and to respond to citizens’ questions and concerns. This has also assisted the Division in prioritizing short, medium and long-term maintenance issues and capital improvement needs. This means that even with a widespread system, the Division has been able to remain connected with citizens and communicate promptly and directly with them.

The following are some excerpts of communications received during the second quarter of 2008 (and where appropriate, how the Division responded):

Feedback about the Division: *“I strongly agree with the current policy of giving the smaller parks to local cities and focusing attention on regional parks and trails. I make regular use of many city and county parks and feel that they are a tremendous plus to living here. Thank you! Please assist the WA Water Trails Assoc. in developing/expanding the Cascadia Marine Trail by providing places to launch/land/camp at the water's edge.”*

Feedback on Marymoor Park: *“I'm at Marymoor almost every day tending my garden at the pea patch. I also use the off-leash dog park and have attended concerts. Marymoor is just the greatest park ... so many uses for so many people ... it is a real treasure!”*

Other community outreach initiatives

- ❖ On April 5, the White Center community commemorated the renaming of White Center Park to “Steve Cox Memorial Park” in honor of fallen King County Sheriff’s Deputy, Steve Cox. The event, which was well-covered by local print and broadcast media, also marked the grand re-opening of Mel Olson Stadium. In addition to a season-opening home game by Seattle Prep, King County Executive Ron Sims, Sheriff Sue Rahr, and Councilmember Larry Phillips said a few words, and Steve Cox’s 2 ½ year old son threw out the ceremonial first pitch.
- ❖ Sponsored by the American Heart Association, the Team Start Scavenger Hunt was launched on June 18 and encourages people to explore King County Parks’ facilities to get heart healthy. Teams register on-line and then answer a set of questions after visiting King County Parks’ facilities. The first 25 families to answer all the questions receive passes to the Woodland Park Zoo. This partnership is an excellent example of the no-cost partnerships the Division leverages that promote parks and encourages healthy lifestyles.
- ❖ After multiple, well-attended community meetings, a community vision for Skyway Park was finalized in June. This effort is part of the multi-agency Community Enhancement Initiative to revitalize the neighborhood and was carried out with the help of Pomegranate Center. As a result of this process, a “Friends of Skyway Park” group has formed and is coming together to organize a community celebration in the park in September.
- ❖ The Division strives to continually improve and update its website to make it an interesting, helpful and relevant tool for the public. As a result, daily traffic to the site has steadily increased by an average of approximately ten percent during the second quarter when compared with the same period in 2007.